

# Captain Myers Bad Day- Reader's Theater

(Accompany this activity with photos of the Conococheague Aqueduct Breech)

## Characters:

Narrator 1

Joseph Davis – Stepson

Narrator 2

David Cushwa II

Captain Frank Myers

**Narrator 1:** It is Scene 1 and the Setting is the Cushwa Basin on the morning of April 20, 1920. People are standing around talking to each other as they are waiting for their coal to be unloaded.

**Narrator 2:** Two days before, Captain Frank Myers, of Big Pool, left Cumberland with coal for Cushwa at Williamsport.

**Captain Myers** – We are almost ready to unload our coal, Joe.

**Joseph:** I'm looking forward to taking a little break while we are here. Maybe we can buy some fresh bread at the Brandt's house.

**Captain Myers** – Should be able to after we unload this coal. We may be able to take a trip into town and get some breakfast depending on how soon our boat gets unloaded.

**Narrator 1:** It is Scene 2 and the Setting is the Cushwa Warehouse later in the morning of April 20, 1920. People are still talking as their coal is unloaded.

**Narrator 2** – the boat finally gets up to the warehouse doors and Captain Myers goes into the warehouse to get his receipt from David Cushwa II, the owner of the warehouse

**Captain Myers** – Good morning, Mr. Cushwa. I'm unloading some more coal for you and would like to get my receipt.

**David Cushwa II** – Nice seeing you Captain Myers. Of course, I will give you a receipt. How was your trip down?

**Captain Myers** – It was a good one. My stepson and I made really good time.

David Cushwa II – That’s good! Here’s your receipt. I’m sure that I will be seeing you soon with another load of coal.

*(After getting the receipt, they are still unloading coal...and Captain Myers and Joseph are talking)*

Captain Myers: All four of the mules okay?

Joseph: Yes, sir.

Captain Myers: Well since they are still unloading coal let’s take a trip into town. This will give the mules a longer chance to rest before we start home.

Joseph: They will definitely like that.

Narrator 1: It is Scene 3 and the Setting is the Conococheague Aqueduct. Captain Myers’s boat is approaching the Conococheague Aqueduct on its way back to Cumberland. It is late morning on April 20, 1920.

Narrator 2: They turn the boat west after leaving the Cushwa Basin. Before they reach the aqueduct they have to wait until another loaded boat comes through, because boats heading downstream have the right of way.

Captain Myers: Alright, the other boat is getting ready to come out so be ready.

Joseph: Ready.

Captain Myers: Let’s start through.

Narrator 2: Joseph is on the towpath with the mules as Captain Myers starts through the aqueduct on his boat. He notices that the north wall is trembling. The trembling increases and...

Captain Myers: The wall is starting to go!!! Joseph, cut the ropes to the mules and keep walking with them as quickly as you can!!!

Joseph: Okay! What about you?

Captain Myers: I’m jumping off as soon as I can!

**Narrator 2:** Captain Myers, Joseph, and the mules reach safety, but the boat is not so lucky. The wall collapses and the boat ends up in the Conococheague Creek. It takes 24 hours for the water to empty from that portion of the canal.